

## THE BIG SHOW.

A Description of the Exterior and Interior of the Centennial Buildings. The Space Allotted to Each of the Nations Exhibiting.

The New York Herald's Philadelphia correspondent gives some interesting figures relating to the Centennial exhibition and buildings.

The main exhibition building is located immediately east of the intersection of Belmont and Elm avenues. Elm avenue is the southern boundary line of this portion of Fairmount park and of the exhibition grounds, and all of the principal approaches from the city are at this point. The main building runs parallel with this avenue, and is the first of the exhibition buildings, which rises prominently before the sight as you approach the grounds from the east by the horse car lines. The building is in the form of a parallelogram, extending east and west 1,800 feet in length, and north and south 464 feet in width.

The larger portion of the building is one story in height and shows the main cornice upon the outside at 45 feet above the ground, the interior height being 70 feet at the lanterns in the roof. At the center of the longer sides, or fronts of the building, are projections 416 feet across, and in the center of the sides are similar projections 216 feet across. In these projections, in the center of the four sides, are the main entrances, which are provided with arcades upon the ground floor and central facades, extending to the height of 90 feet. They are ornate and imposing. Upon the corner of the main building are four towers 75 feet high, surrounded by a spiral at each angle of the towers, and between the towers and the central projections, or entrances, a lower roof, 24 feet to the cornice, breaks the uniformity.

In order to obtain a central feature for the building, as a whole, the roof over the central part for 184 feet square has been raised above the surrounding portion, and four towers, forty-eight feet square, rising to 120 feet in height, with spires thirty feet higher, have been introduced at the corner of the elevated roof. Innumerable flag-staffs, with small flags and pennons of all nations, surmount the roof at these towers and along the eaves, and the effect is gay and brilliant, while the many windows with which the walls of the building are pierced make it appear light and graceful.

The foundations of the buildings are piers of masonry and the superstructure is composed of wrought-iron columns, which support wrought-iron roof-trusses. Lengthwise of the building the columns are twenty-four feet apart. There are 672 columns in all, the shortest being twenty feet and the longest 125 feet in length. The building being a temporary construction, both columns and roof-trusses are so designed that they can easily be taken down for re-erection elsewhere. The sides of the building, for the height of seven feet from the ground, are finished with brickwork, with panels between the columns, and above the seven feet with glazed sash. All the corners and angles of the building, upon the exterior, are concentrated by small galvanized-iron octagonal turrets, which extend above the roof and are surmounted by flag-staffs, or, at the other places, by the national eagle, made of galvanized iron, gilded. The national standard, with appropriate emblems, is placed over the center of each of the four main entrances. Surmounting each of the side entrances is a trophy showing the national colors and the coat-of-arms of the country occupying that part of the building.

The areas covered by the main building are as follows:

	Square feet.	Acres.
Ground floor.....	872,220	20.02
Upper floors, in projections.....	37,344	.86
Upper floors, in towers.....	26,344	.60
Total.....	935,908	21.47

The general arrangement of the ground floor shows a central avenue, or nave, 120 feet in width, and extending 1,832 feet in length. It is the largest avenue of that width ever introduced into an exhibition building. On either side of this nave there is an avenue 100 by 1,332 feet long. Between the nave and side avenues are aisles forty-eight feet wide, and on the other side of the building smaller aisles twenty-four feet in width. In order to break the great length of the roof-lines three cross avenues, or transepts, have been introduced, of the same widths and of the same relative positions to each other as the nave and avenues running lengthwise—namely, a central transept, 120 feet in width by 416 feet in length, with one on either side of 100 feet by 416 feet, and aisles between of forty-eight feet. The intersection of these avenues and transepts in the central portion of the building results in dividing the floor into nine open spaces free from supporting columns, and covering in the aggregate an area of 416 square feet. Four of these spaces are 100 feet square, four 100 feet by 120 feet, and the central space, or pavilion, 120 feet square. The intersections of the forty-eight-foot aisles produce four interior courts forty-eight feet square, one at each corner of the central space. The main promenade through the nave and central transept are each eighty feet in width, and thence through the center of the side avenues and transepts fifteen feet each. All other walks are ten feet wide, and lead, at either end, to exit-doors. Louvre ventilators are over the central nave and each of the avenues, and skylights are in the roof of the central aisles. Small balconies or galleries of observation have been provided with four central towers, at different heights, and they will form attractive points of observation.

The interior decoration of the building is in excellent taste. The walls and roof are painted a very pale blue, with a variegated border encircling them, the prevailing color of which is a bright carmine.

Standing in the gallery over the north portal of the main building, just in front of the mammoth organ, the visitor can command a view of the whole magnificent display. He will see in separate and distinct groups the goods of every nation grouped together in the following ingenious manner. On the right, occupying the entire northwestern quarter of the floor, are the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Great Britain first, then Canada (a separate display), then Australia, then other British possessions. Facing the observatory, covering the southwest quarter, are grouped the Teutonic and Slavonic races, in the order of Germany, Austria,

Hungary, Russia and Denmark. Turning to the left of the center, covering the northeastern quarter of the building, will be found the Latin races, beginning with France and her colonies, then following with Switzerland, Belgium, Brazil, the Netherlands and Mexico. The whole of the southeastern or lower left-hand quarter is taken up by the United States. This classification of nations seems to meet general approval, and this settlement of a much-vexed question appears to be considered a very happy one. Of course the plan cannot be followed out strictly, as it was necessary to economize space by putting some nation in a place where it did not exactly belong, as in separating Italy from the other Latin races and assigning it to a space beside Norway; but this was the system adopted in general.

The space in the main building assigned to the nations that have requested it is as follows, with alterations and corrections to date:

	Square feet.
Italy.....	1,167.0
Norway.....	4,897.0
Sweden.....	17,755.0
Austria and other British colonies.....	24,073.0
Canada.....	24,073.0
Great Britain.....	31,773.0
France and colonies.....	4,648.0
Belgium.....	16,368.0
Netherlands.....	43,313.0
Mexico.....	15,450.0
Chili and Argentine Republic.....	5,654.0
Germany.....	1,072.0
Orange Free State.....	1,072.0
Japan.....	16,568.0
China.....	7,584.0
Denmark.....	2,510.0
Turkey.....	6,022.0
Egypt.....	5,022.0
Sandwich Islands.....	1,874.0
Portugal.....	11,233.0
Russia.....	11,092.0
Austria and Hungary.....	24,073.0
German Empire.....	27,755.0
United States of America.....	187,755.0

There are other nations whose assignments of space have not yet been issued. The revised and corrected list of the countries represented by national commissioners shows the names of thirty-seven nationalities, a larger number than have ever been represented at any previous world's fair.

In the United States section there are 3,000 American exhibitors, and every foot of space has been applied for two and a half times over.

The following figures, giving the dimensions of the main building from measurements taken from center to center of supporting columns, are not easily remembered, but they will be found useful for reference:

	Feet.
Length of building.....	1,830
Width of building.....	464
Central avenue or nave.....	
Length.....	1,832
Width.....	120
Height to top of supporting columns.....	45
Height to ridge of roof.....	70
Central transept.....	
Length.....	416
Width.....	100
Height to top of columns.....	45
Height to ridge of roof.....	70
Side avenue.....	
Length.....	1,833
Width.....	100
Height to top of columns.....	45
Height to ridge of roof.....	70
Side transept.....	
Length.....	416
Width.....	100
Height to top of columns.....	45
Height to ridge of roof.....	70
Central aisle.....	
Length at east end.....	744
Length at west end.....	672
Width.....	46
Height to roof.....	24
Side aisle.....	
Length at east end.....	744
Length at west end.....	672
Width.....	46
Height to roof.....	24
Central space or pavilion.....	
Ground plan (square).....	120
Height to top of supporting columns.....	72
Height to ridge of roof.....	96
Towers over.....	
Ground plan (square).....	120
Height to roof.....	120
Corner tower.....	
Ground plan (square).....	120